THE MINISTER OFTOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) With a view to providing an elevating image of India's culture and promoting healthy and sustainable tourism during the Tenth Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture has drawn up proposals to develop hubs which synthesize the elements of culture, tourism and clean civic life. There would be at least one such hub in every State and Union Territory. Under this plan, both destination and domestic tourism is being promoted. An aggressive campaign has also been launched to promote and market India as an attractive tourist destination.

Landing rights to foreign carriers

*293. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a large shortage of airline seat capacity during the peak winter season, particularly due to inadequate fleet strength with domestic carriers; and

(b) if so, whether Government will consider a liberal, long-term policy of granting landing rights on reciprocal basis to foreign carriers?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) Though generally the world over on any sector, it is difficult to get seat easily during the peak season, it is not correct to say that there was severe shortage of airline seat capacity during peak winter season for air travel between India and different countries. In fact, as compared to winter 2001, different airlines have deployed 5324 seats per week more on international sectors during winter 2002. Out of this, Air India and Indian Airlines have deployed 4461 additional seats per week on international sectors. Besides, foreign airlines have been allowed to deploy additional capacity as per demand under the Open Sky Policy of the Government during the peak winter season effective 1st December, 2002. Foreign airlines have deployed 20215 additional seats so far under this policy.

(b) Traffic rights on different sectors are reviewed from time to time with concerned countries and, keeping in view the tourism and economic interests of the country and long term interest of the national

carriers, traffic rights are increased in accordance with estimated average demand on a particular sector.

2003 as fresh water year

t294. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the 2003 has been decided to be celebrated as "Fresh water year";

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether any special scheme for water harvesting has been formulated for implementation this year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the target of total water harvesting under the scheme and the amount expected to be spent for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): (a) and (b) Government of India has declared 2003 as 'Freshwater Year' in line with the United Nations' Resolution declaring the year 2003 as 'International Year of Freshwater'. The launching of 2003 as Freshwater Year was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 5th February, 2003. The objective of adopting 2003 as Freshwater Year are:

- Increasing awareness among stakeholders regarding scarcity value of freshwater.
- Conservation and efficient use of Freshwater.
- Preservation of Freshwater-quality and its ecosystem.
- Augmentation of freshwater resources.
- Community partnership for informed decision making.

In order to achieve the above objectives following activities are proposed to be taken up under the Freshwater year:

(a) Freshwater Conservation Campaign

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.